

NSC BRIEFING

29 November 1956

HUNGARIAN DEPORTATIONS

I. US legation Budapest states that it has been receiving fewer and fewer reports of deportations, and commented on 23 November that the deportation program has "probably ceased."

A. Possible that Soviet leaders now believe enough young Hungarian men have been deported (or have escaped to the West) to accomplish one of their primary aims--breaking hard core of potential Hungarian military resistance.

B. Mass Soviet arrests and deportations apparently began on a full scale on or about 7 November.

C. By 14 November, our Legation estimated at least 16,000 Hungarians had been rounded-up and deported from Budapest alone. Recent press reports, citing Hungarian railway officials, claim that a total of about 37,000 Hungarians have been deported.

II. USSR is old hand at mass deportations. In the summer of 1953, after East Berlin riots, as many as 6,000 East Germans were taken to the USSR.

A. In Hungary deportations apparently involved minimum of selectivity: many reports claim that deportees, including women and children, were selected more or less at random. Most, however, apparently young men.

B. Young men are also the predominant group among refugees entering Austria. Thus, the USSR is able to rid itself of potential troublemakers through two avenues--deportations and escapes. The latter were certainly stimulated by the former.

III. Although Hungarian deportations have apparently stopped, some Hungarians fear that USSR may be contemplating mass genocide against the Hungarian nation.

A. Hungarians fear that continuation of general strike, plus Kadar regime's inability to restore order, may prompt Soviet leaders to scrap Kadar, and eliminate the nation as a whole--perhaps in a manner similar to the Soviet action in the Baltic states in 1940.